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Remarks

Applicant thanks the Examiner for participating in a cordial and productive personal interview with the undersigned and the inventor on December 13, 2007. The substance of the interview is reflected in the Examiner's interview summary.

Applicant has amended claim 48 to avoid the Examiner's objections under 35 U.S.C. 112(2). Applicant submits that claims 68-70 are not objectionable for the use of "said program" as stated in the Office Action for the reason that the phrase noted does not appear in the claims.

With respect to prior art, at the interview Applicant explained that the halftone screens created in accordance with the principles of the present invention, which are shown in the various examples in Figs. 2-4H, provide a demonstrably higher quality output than traditional "round dot" halftone screens, for the reason that traditional "round dot" halftone printing suffers from poor ink coverage in areas of dense color. Applicant explained that this is caused by hydroplaning of the printing plate above the printing surface in areas where the ink-bearing plate surfaces are very large. As a consequence of this hydroplaning, the printing plate does not lay ink evenly upon the surface in areas of dark color. The screens of the present invention, in contrast to "round dot", do not have ink-bearing features that are large in all dimensions. Rather, even in areas of dense color (near the bottom of the screens), the ink-bearing features are no wider, in their narrowest dimension, than about 30% of the width of the halftone cell.

Thus, as now recited in the independent claims, in the screens of the present invention, "in substantially all halftone cells the narrowest width of any ink-bearing portion of

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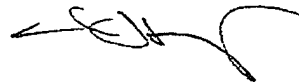
each halftone cell is no greater than approximately 30% of the width of the halftone cell". As a consequence, there is a non-ink-bearing area near to any location in the cell, even in cells that print dense color. The net result is reduced hydroplaning, better printing plate - printed surface contact, and better printed results.

At the interview the Examiner was able to see the more consistent and pleasing results, particularly in areas of dark color, that are achieved by this improvement in the print screen.

Applicant submits, in view of the above and the amendments made to the claims, that all claims are allowable over the cited prior art, and requests issuance of a Notice of Allowability.

A petition for three month extension of time accompanys this communication; if, however, this petition is missing, please consider this paper a petition for such three-month extension of time, and apply the appropriate extension of time fee to Deposit Account 23-3000. If any other charges or credits are necessary to complete this communication, please apply them to Deposit Account 23-3000.

Respectfully submitted,



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